

CATHERINE'S HIDDEN LIFE

ier simple and chaste soul to the banquet of lust. Their luggestions grew so hideous and persistent, that she fled in error from the cell that had become like a circle of the infernal

•egions, and took refuge in the church ; but they pursued her hither, though there their power seemed checked. And her Christ seemed *far* from her. At last she cried out, remembering he words in the vision : " I have chosen suffering for my xmsolation, and will gladly bear these and all other torments, in he name of the Saviour, for as long as shall please His Majesty."

* When she said this, immediately all that assemblage of demons leparted in confusion, and a great light from above appeared hat illumined all the room, and in the light the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, nailed to the Cross and stained with blood, as rle was when by His own blood He entered into the holy)lace ; and from the Cross He called the holy virgin, saying : My daughter Catherine, seest thou how much I have suffered or thee ? Let it not then be hard to thee to endure for Me.' Then, in another guise, He approached her to console her, and spoke sweetly to her of the triumph that she had already won in hat battle. But she, imitating Antony, said : * And where wast Thou, my Lord, whilst my heart was tormented with so much bulness ?' To which the Lord answered : ° I was in thy heart. Thou, My daughter, who, with My and not with thine own virtue, hast so faithfully battled, hast merited still greater favour rom Me ; and therefore, henceforth, I will reveal Myself to thee nore often and in more familiar wise.' "

This was the first time that the divine Voice had called her >y her name, and it gave her such rapture of delight that she Drayed her confessor, Fra Tommaso, that he would always iddress her in this way: *My daughter Catherine*; in order that he sweetness might be ever renewed. Her colloquies with the Javiour grew more frequent, more prolonged, more intimate. Jometimes He appeared to her with His Virgin Mother, some-imes with St. Dominic, St. Mary Magdalene, St. John the ivangelist, St. Paul, or other saints ; " but most times He came mattended, and conversed with her as a friend with a most intimate